



Arizona Department of Public Safety

- For Immediate Release -

Tuesday, February 17, 2009

Arizona Department of Public Safety officers seize over two tons of marijuana so far this month during several traffic stops and investigations

Heroin and meth also seized; street value of drugs over 2.5 million dollars

Officers with the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) seized 4,116 pounds of marijuana during the course of several traffic stops made during the first half of February and through the efforts of criminal investigations led by DPS. The marijuana has an estimated street value of \$2,263,800. Officers also seized 18 pounds of heroin and two pounds of meth during one traffic stop in Yuma County. The heroin has a street value of \$286,264 and the meth has a street value of \$34,000. The total value of the drugs seized is \$2,584,064.

One of the most unique seizures took place on February, 5, 2009 at about 7:48 p.m. when a DPS Canine Officer stopped a white Ford pick-up truck for a traffic violation on Interstate 10 westbound five miles northwest of Casa Grande. The officer could smell a very strong odor of raw marijuana as he walked up to the pick-up. A search later revealed 11 bundles of marijuana strapped to the frame of the truck. The bundles weighed in at 171 pounds. The driver, Angel Villa, 27, of Las Vegas Nev., was arrested and booked into the Pima County Jail on marijuana distribution and possession charges. The marijuana and Ford truck were seized.

“The excellent work of the DPS officers assigned to our Highway Patrol Division is evident when they intercept drugs moving through the state. We hope these seizures send a message to the drug cartels that the heat is on in Arizona,” said Roger Vanderpool, director of the Department of Public Safety.

*Photos available upon request.

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